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RHMFIISS/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/02/2017  
TAGS: PREL PGOV MARR MOPS TU  
SUBJECT: TURKEY: WEAPONS TRAINING DEPLOYMENTS REINITIATED  
AT INCIRLIK AIR BASE

Classified By: Political-Military Counselor Carl Siebentritt,  
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) On February 23, the US 22nd and 23rd Fighter Squadrons, based at Spangdahlem Air Base in Germany, completed a six-week long Weapons Training Deployment (WTD) (NOTE: Turkey prefers the use of the term Rotational Training Deployment) at Incirlik Air Base, the first significant WTD to take place in Turkey since 1991. During the training, over 60 pilots conducted more than 600 sorties -- almost 15% more than projected -- and completed low altitude and night flight training requirements. By housing 250 air crew and support personnel on base and not in commercial facilities, the squadrons saved over \$2 million in administrative costs.

¶2. (C) COMMENT: In recent years Turkey has resisted several US requests to conduct WTDs in Turkey. The Turkish General Staff has rejected US requests to expand the WTD program beyond Incirlik to Konya Air Base, where US pilots participate in the annual multilateral Anatolian Eagle exercise, because US use of Konya for this purpose is not reflected in the Defense Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA). The successful conduct of this WTD, which received minimal and generally positive press coverage (Note: although one article suggested this was preparation for an attack on Iran), enabled Spangdahlem pilots to accomplish required training events which would be difficult to complete in Germany due to poor weather and significant airspace restrictions both in Germany and in the surrounding countries. It provides a positive precedent for a follow-on WTD at Incirlik that is tentatively scheduled for May 2007.  
END COMMENT.

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